

# Are You Living with HIV or AIDS?

**A GUIDE TO SERVICES IN MAINE**



State of Maine  
HIV, STD and Viral Hepatitis Program

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STATE OF MAINE  
HIV, STD AND VIRAL HEPATITIS PROGRAM  
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# Knowing Your Options

Living with HIV or AIDS can be challenging at times. You do not have to face these challenges alone.

This guide tells you about services for people living with HIV or AIDS in Maine. This guide can help you find services you need. You will learn which services you are eligible for and how to get them. You will find information about:

- Getting a doctor.
- Insurance and drug coverage.
- Help with getting medical care and other services.
- HIV and your legal rights.
- Help with housing.

Some services are free or low cost. These services are paid for by the Ryan White Comprehensive AIDS Resources Emergency Act, called the CARE Act. The CARE Act is a federal law that pays for primary health care and other services if you are low income and have HIV or AIDS.

Some services may change over time. The best way to find out more about services is to contact the agencies providing them. Contact information for agencies is given at the end of this guide. Your health needs may also change in the future. Use this guide as you continue to make decisions about your care.



# Getting the Services You Need

## **CASE MANAGEMENT**

Case management can help you get many of the services you need to live with HIV. Case managers are trained to work with you to help you get these services. Case management is free and confidential.

To find out more, contact one of the case management agencies listed on page 21.

### **Planning What You Need**

A case manager can help you get medical care and other services. It works like this:

- The case manager will ask you questions about your medical, social, and emotional needs.
- You and your case manager will make a plan about how to get what you need.
- You and your case manager will check in regularly to make sure you are getting what you need.

Case managers can help you in the following ways:

- Getting medical services.
- Getting HIV medications.
- Following medication schedules and requirements.
- Signing up for disability benefits or health insurance.
- Getting support services.
- Finding safe and affordable housing.
- Making a financial plan.
- Preventing the infection of others.
- Living a healthy life.

### **Finding Other Services**

Case managers can help you learn how to get other services as well. Other services include legal services, needle exchange programs, and emotional and social support services, including support groups and buddy programs. You may be able to get emergency financial assistance through case management services. Emergency financial assistance can help pay for prescription medication, medical and dental services, transportation, and other services you need.

### **Getting Involved**

Case management agencies have social events, groups and planning boards. Your case manager will encourage you to be involved. Take this chance to meet new friends, and to guide your care.

To find out more, contact one of the case management agencies listed on page 21.



# **Getting Good Medical Care**

Finding good medical care is not always easy for people with HIV or AIDS. But good medical care is important for your health. HIV can be treated and you can live a long, healthy life with good medical care.

## **FINDING A DOCTOR**

Maine has many doctors who are used to treating people with HIV. If your doctor is not experienced, he or she should refer you to an HIV specialist. Your case manager can also help you find a doctor that is right for you.

Remember:

- You and your doctor are a team. To get the best possible care, you must find a doctor you are comfortable with.
- You should talk openly about your life, including drug use and sexual activity. This information is important so your doctor can check for infections that may make you sick.
- Your doctor should listen to you, answer your questions, and explain your options.
- You and your doctor should always make decisions about your care together. You are in charge of your care.
- If you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant, talk to your doctor about keeping you, your partner, and your baby safe.

## **Ryan White Title III Programs**

Ryan White Title III programs provide primary health care services for people living with HIV or AIDS in Maine. Other services include dental care, mental health services, nutrition services, and help with medications. There are Ryan White Title III programs in the northern, central, and southern regions of Maine. For program contact information, see page 22.

## **Virology Treatment Center (VTC)**

The Virology Treatment Center in Portland provides HIV care, psychiatric support, and nutrition services. It also offers drug trials for people living with HIV or AIDS. The program can work with your primary care doctor to be sure you get the best HIV care possible. For contact information, see page 22.

## HIV MEDICATIONS

HIV medication may help you live a longer, healthier life. You and your doctor will decide if and when to start using HIV medications. Before starting a new treatment, you should:

- Understand how your medications work.
- Learn about side effects and how to manage them.
- Tell your doctor about any other medications, herbs or vitamins you take.

### Taking Your Medications Every Day

It is important that you take each medication exactly as your doctor told you to. If you don't take all of your medications every day, they might stop working. You may run out of treatment options if you don't take your medications correctly. Talk with your doctor if you have trouble taking your medications.

### Side Effects

Some medications have side effects. The side effects might make you want to stop taking your medications. You should not stop taking your medications or change your schedule without talking to your doctor. If you have problems with your medications, tell your doctor. Together you can look for other options.

## HIV AND OTHER ILLNESSES

If you have HIV, you should be screened for hepatitis and other sexually transmitted diseases (STD). These illnesses are transmitted the same way as HIV, and you may have them even if you do not have symptoms. It is important to know if you have one of these illnesses because:

- Other illnesses affect the way your body reacts to HIV and HIV medications.
- If you do not already have hepatitis, you may want to consider getting a vaccination.

# Finding Insurance and Drug Coverage

## FEDERAL POVERTY LEVELS

Every year the government decides on the "Federal Poverty Level" (FPL). If you earn less than a certain amount of money each month, you can get some services for free. Call the program, or your case manager to see if you qualify for services.

## MAINECARE

Medicaid is a program that pays for medical care for people with low income. MaineCare is Maine's Medicaid Program. With HIV or AIDS, you may receive either full or limited MaineCare benefits.

To see if you can get MaineCare benefits, speak with your case manager, or contact one of these agencies:

- MaineCare Member Services: 1-800-977-6740.
- Office of MaineCare Services: 1-866-796-2463 ext.7-4758.
- Your local Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Eligibility Office. For DHHS contact information, visit the DHHS website at [www.maine.gov/dhhs/generalinfo.htm](http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/generalinfo.htm).

### Full MaineCare Benefits

To get full MaineCare benefits, you must:

- Live in Maine.
- Meet income rules (Your income can be at different levels of the FPL depending on your work or living situation.)
- Meet eligibility rules.
- Agree to program rules and sign a consent form.



This benefit covers services such as:

- Regular office visits (well checkups, sick visits, preventive health care).
- Hospital care (emergency care, ambulance services, labs and x-rays, surgery).
- Midwifery/delivery, service before or after the birth of a baby.
- Family planning, screening for sexually transmitted diseases.
- Vision screening/eyeglasses, hearing tests/hearing aids.
- Mental health therapy, substance abuse therapy.
- Dental work.
- Prescription medications.

Some or all of these services may have restrictions.

## **MAINECARE LIMITED BENEFIT FOR PEOPLE LIVING WITH HIV/AIDS (WAIVER PROGRAM)**

To get limited MaineCare benefits, you must:

- Live in Maine.
- Have HIV or AIDS.
- Earn less than 250% of the Federal Poverty Level (\$2,042 per month for an individual in 2006; \$4,165 per month for a family of 4 in 2006).
- Agree to program rules and sign a consent form.

To get this coverage, you must tell the MaineCare that you have HIV. They will not ask.

This benefit covers services such as:

- HIV/AIDS treatment (including HAART), counseling, and medication.
- Ambulance and transportation to appointments for HIV/AIDS services.
- Lab and x-ray services.

- Mental health and substance abuse services.
- Physician, physician assistant, and nurse practitioner services.
- Hospital care, case management, and family planning.

You might need to pay some costs with this program: \$10 for doctor's appointments and \$10 for medications. You might also pay a monthly fee. The AIDS Drug Assistance Program may be able to help you. Call ADAP at 207-287-2899 or 1-800-821-5821 to find out more.

## **AIDS DRUG ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (ADAP)**

The AIDS Drug Assistance Program helps people who cannot afford their HIV medications.

The ADAP program:

- Pays for all FDA-approved HIV antiretroviral medications.
- Pays for many medications used to treat other HIV/AIDS-related infections.
- Helps with some insurance costs.

To get ADAP you must:

- Live in Maine.
- Have HIV.
- Meet income guidelines (earn less than 400% of the Federal Poverty Level—\$3,268 per month for an individual in 2006; \$6,664 per month for a family of 4 in 2006).
- To see if you can get help from ADAP, talk to your case manager or call ADAP at: 207-287-2899 or 1-800-821-5821.

## **MEDICARE**

Medicare is a health insurance program for:

- People ages 65 years and older.
- People under 65 years old with a disability (people living with AIDS may qualify).
- People with kidney failure.
- People with a work history.



Medicare has three parts:

- Part A, Hospital Insurance, covers emergency and hospital care.
- Part B, Medical Insurance, covers doctor's visits, lab tests, and other care.
- Part D, Prescription Drug Coverage, covers medications.

You might need to pay some costs with this program—\$2 or \$5 for medications, and a monthly fee. The AIDS Drug Assistance Program may be able to help you. Call ADAP at 207-287-2899 or 1-800-821-5821 to find out more.

To learn more about Medicare, speak with your case manager, call 1-800-MEDICARE, or visit [www.medicare.gov](http://www.medicare.gov).

## PRIVATE INSURANCE

Health insurance is important if you have HIV or AIDS. HIV medications and care are expensive. If you cannot get help from MaineCare, ADAP, or Medicare, you may need private insurance.

You might already have health insurance through work or your family. It is important to keep your insurance if you can.

If you leave your job, you can buy COBRA insurance. This insurance will work for 18 to 36 months. You will pay full price for your coverage, but it is cheaper than paying for care.

If you have no other insurance, you can buy private insurance. Call the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield State of Maine Dirigo Plan at 1-800-585-0099 or visit [www.dirigohealth.maine.gov](http://www.dirigohealth.maine.gov).

It is okay to change insurance types, but having no insurance is a big risk. Your case manager can help you look at your options. If your insurance coverage is changing, speak with your case manager.

# Deciding When and How to Tell Others

When you are living with HIV or AIDS you have to make many decisions. One important decision is when and how to tell others about your HIV.

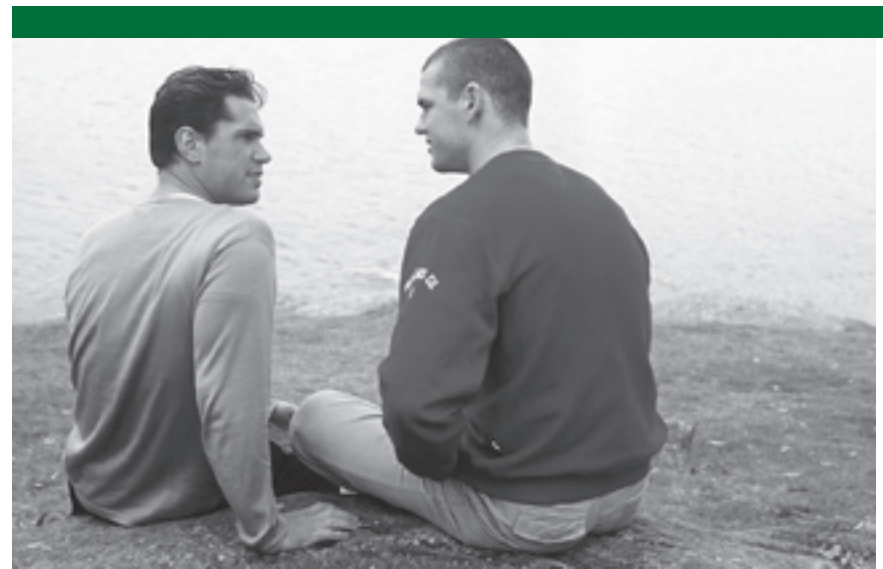
## Getting Support

You don't have to tell everyone about your HIV. But telling people can help you get support. Your case manager can help you decide who to tell and when. Your case manager can also help you find support groups and buddy programs. These supports can give you a safe place to talk about your worries or issues.

## Keeping You and Your Partners Healthy

HIV can be spread through sex, sharing needles and works, blood-to-blood contact, and from mother to child. But you can protect others from getting HIV. And you can keep yourself safe from new infections.

- There are ways you can keep your sex and/or needle-sharing partners safe. It is important that they know about their risk for HIV.
- You must also consider how to protect yourself and your partners from new HIV or STD infections.



Maine has two services to help you with these issues. Your case manager can refer you to these services. You can also access the services on your own.

### **COMPREHENSIVE RISK COUNSELING SERVICE (CRCS)**

Sometimes it is hard to change your behaviors. But some behaviors can put you or others at risk for HIV. CRCS can help you. CRCS counselors can help you set goals to reduce your risk. And you will have support as you reach your goals.

CRCS counselors can also help you decide how to tell others about your HIV status.

CRCS is confidential and absolutely free. See page 23 for a list of agencies that provide CRCS services.

### **PARTNER COUNSELING AND REFERRAL SERVICE (PCRS)**

Everyone who tests positive for HIV or AIDS in Maine is offered PCRS. PCRS can help you tell your partners about HIV risk. You can use PCRS when you first test positive for HIV, or at any other time. PCRS is absolutely free and can help keep your partners safe.

With PCRS, a specially trained person—called a Disease Intervention Specialist—can help you. You get to choose the kind of help you want. They can:

- Confidentially tell your partners of their risk—your name will never be told to partners;
- Be with you when you tell your partners;
- Help get you ready to tell your partners yourself;
- Set up HIV testing for your partners.

To get help or more information about PCRS, contact the offices listed on pages 23–24 and ask for the Disease Intervention Specialist (DIS).

## **Knowing Your Rights**

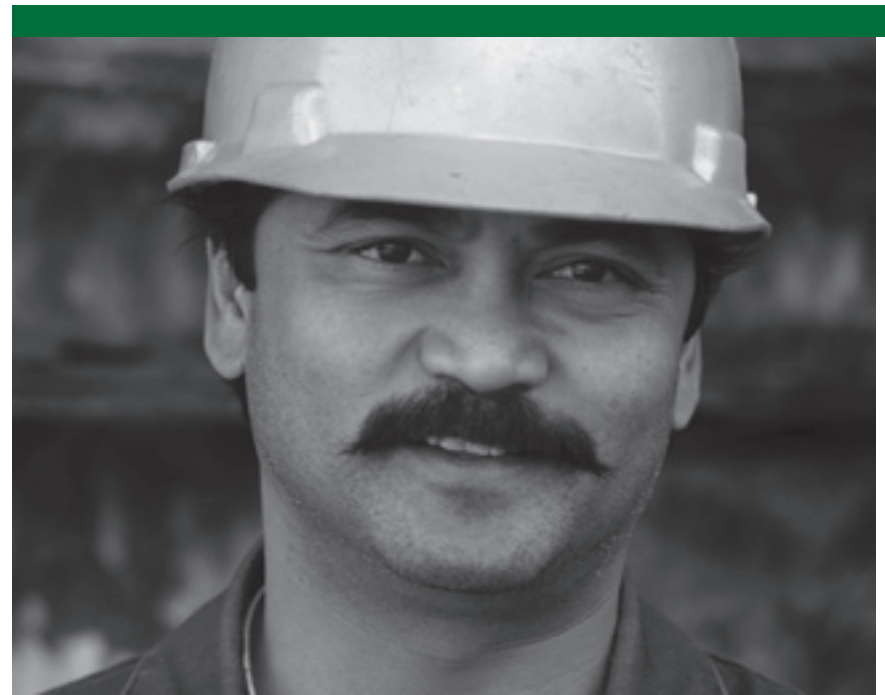
There are laws that protect people living with HIV or AIDS. You cannot be discriminated against in the areas of:

- Employment
- Housing
- Education
- Access to public places
- Getting credit

If you have been treated unfairly because of your HIV status, many organizations can help you understand your options:

- The Maine Human Rights Commission
- The Maine Civil Liberties Union
- The Volunteer Lawyers Project.

See page 24 for contact information.





# Finding Help with Housing

If you need help with housing, Housing Assistance & Volunteer Enlistment Network (HAVEN) can help. HAVEN gives short-term help to people with HIV or AIDS who have low income.

HAVEN can help you:

- Pay your rent
- Pay your mortgage
- Pay your utilities
- Get a rental subsidy
- Get residential care

Speak with your case manager to learn more or apply for help. If you do not have a case manager, call 207-774-6877 and ask for the HAVEN Program.





# Contact Information

## **HIV CASE MANAGEMENT AGENCIES**

### **AIDS Lodging House**

142 High St.  
Portland, ME 04101  
207-773-7165  
*Serves residents of Cumberland County*

### **Dayspring AIDS Support Services**

9 Green St., Ground Floor  
Augusta, ME 04330  
207-621-6201  
*Serves residents of Franklin, Kennebec, Knox, Lincoln, Sagadahoc, Somerset and Waldo counties*

### **Down East AIDS Network**

25 Pine St., Suite A  
Ellsworth, ME 04605  
207-667-3506  
*Serves residents of Hancock and Washington counties*

### **Eastern Maine AIDS Network**

370 Harlow St.  
Bangor, ME 04402  
207-990-3626  
*Serves residents of Aroostook, Penobscot, and Piscataquis counties*

### **Frannie Peabody Center**

335 Valley St.  
Portland, ME 04102  
207-774-6877  
*Serves residents of Cumberland and York counties*

### **St. Mary's Regional Medical Center**

Campus Ave.  
Lewiston, ME 04243  
207-777-8507  
*Serves residents of Androscoggin and Oxford counties*



## MEDICAL CARE PROGRAMS

### Maine General Health Associates

150 Dresden Ave.

Gardiner, ME 04345

207-621-5376

*Serves residents of Central Maine*

### Regional Medical Center at Lubec

43 South Lubec Rd.

Lubec, ME 04652

207-773-1090 extension 2226

*Serves residents of Northern Maine*

### Portland Public Health

#### Positive Health Care

103 India St.

Portland, ME 04101

207-874-8791

*Serves residents of Southern Maine*

### Virology Treatment Center

48 Gilman St.

Portland, ME 04101

207-662-2099

## INSURANCE AND DRUG COVERAGE

### MaineCare

*MaineCare Member Services*

1-800-977-6740

*Office of MaineCare Services*

1-866-796-2463 extension 7-4758

### AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP)

286 Water St., 9th Floor

11 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04103

1-800-821-5821

207-287-2899

### Medicare

1-800-MEDICARE

## PRIVATE INSURANCE

Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield

State of Maine Dirigo Plan

1-800-585-0099

[www.dirigohealth.maine.gov](http://www.dirigohealth.maine.gov)

## COMPREHENSIVE RISK COUNSELING SERVICE PROVIDERS (CRCS)

### Dayspring AIDS Support Services

9 Green St., Ground Floor

Augusta, ME 04330

207-621-6201

*Serves residents of Central Maine*

### Regional Medical Center of Lubec

43 South Lubec Rd.

Lubec, ME 04652

207-773-1090 extension 2226

*Serves residents of Northern Maine*

### Virology Treatment Center

48 Gilman St.

Portland, ME 04101

207-662-2099

*Serves residents of Southern Maine*

## PARTNER COUNSELING AND REFERRAL SERVICE PROVIDERS (PCRS)

### Auburn STD Clinic

79 Main St., 3rd Floor

Auburn, ME 04210

207-795-4019

*Serves residents of Central Maine*

**Bangor STD Clinic**

103 Texas Ave.

Bangor, ME 04401

207-947-0700

*Serves residents of Northern Maine*

**Portland STD Clinic**

103 India St.

Portland, ME 04101

207-874-8940 or 207-756-8084

*Serves residents of Southern Maine*

**LEGAL HELP****Maine Human Rights Commission**

51 State House Station

Augusta, ME 04333

207-624-6050

[www.maine.gov/mhrc](http://www.maine.gov/mhrc)

**Volunteer Lawyers Project**

207-774-4348 or 800-442-4293

[www.vlp.org](http://www.vlp.org)

**Maine Civil Liberties Union**

401 Cumberland Ave., Suite 105

Portland, ME 04101

207-774-5444

**HOUSING HELP****HAVEN Program**

Frannie Peabody Center

335 Valley St.

Portland, ME 04102

207-774-6877